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FOR THOSE THAT CHOOSE TO THINK FOR THEMSELVES

From The Desk Of: MARINA ZACHARIAS

It's been a little over two years since we published our "Food For Thought" article (Volume 1--Issue 2, January 1995). This very brief outline of some of the problems with commercial pet food was intended to give you a few good reasons to strongly consider feeding your pet a raw diet rather than the goop passed off as "food" by the big boys.

The time has come to provide you with a little more detailed information that may help you to make an informed decision with respect to the "convenience" of commercial food versus the "work" involved in preparing your own pet food.

Caution: If you have a weak stomach, skip this article!

IT'S IN THE BAG

Obviously there are millions and millions of pounds of pet food sold in bags and cans every year. Did you ever wonder where they get their "meat" and "fat" from? Do you really think they have their own ranches or farms to raise their own raw material? Of course not! They look to the many rendering plants across the nation to provide them with the tonnage they require on a regular basis.

In the previous article we did mention the quantity of pets shipped to rendering factories to be recycled and used in pet food. However I left it to your imagination to visualize what goes on in a rendering facility. Let me provide you with a few details to assist the imagery!

Firstly let me say that I am glad that these facilities do exist. Without them our cities would run the risk of becoming filled with diseased and rotting carcasses. It's a dirty job that someone has to do. Before World War II, most slaughter houses looked after their own rendering. After the war, the rendering of slaughter waste became a separate specialty. Consequently the rendering plants were no longer subject to most of the federal inspection regulations associated with meat processing. Thus today we find that the industry is largely self regulated and out of the "public eye".

To even begin to understand this industry we must first look at the "raw material" as it is received at the plant. The slaughterhouse for animal carcasses is one of the main suppliers of material to the rendering industry. To prevent condemned meat from being rerouted and used for human consumption, government regulations require that the meat be "denatured" before being sent to the rendering plant. Nice word, but what does that mean?

Basically it means that first it must be contaminated in some way that would make it virtually unusable for human consumption. Some of the materials used to accomplish this task are: carbolic acid, creosote, fuel oil, kerosene, citronella, etc. Once this stuff has literally soaked into the meat, it's then fit to be sent on to the rendering plant.

Another prime source of raw material is the veterinary community. Not only are dogs and cats received in nice little green plastic bags, but also raccoons, possums, deer, foxes, snakes, etc., etc.

Of course we can't forget the grocery industry, that must somehow get rid of the spoiled meat cuts that are no longer saleable and the fat, bones, etc. that we (at home) would consider garbage.

So inside the rendering plant we find the floor piled high with "raw product" consisting of a mixture of whole bodies and animal parts, plastic bags, styrofoam packages, metal tags, pet collars--anything and everything that is considered to be "waste"--but suitable for recycling.

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"Rendering" is the process of cooking raw animal material to remove the moisture and fat. Let's take a closer look at how this is actually done.

Inside the plant we find masked men (because of the stench of rotting carcasses) operating mini-bulldozers, loading the "raw" material into a 10 foot deep stainless steel pit. At the bottom of the pit, a giant auger-grinder begins to turn. This converts the mass material into smaller, more manageable chunks. From there it is transported to another auger for fine shredding.

Now you have to realize that this is a business and like any other business, they have to cut costs wherever possible. Consequently they do not bother to take the time to remove the flea collars from pets, the pesticide ear tags from cattle, the plastic bags, styrofoam packaging, etc. etc. All is grist for the grinder! Just push it in with the bulldozer.

This mass of goop is then cooked at 280 degrees for one hour. During the cooking process the goop produces a layer of yellow grease or tallow that rises to the top and is skimmed off. The cooked meat and bone (along with whatever metal, pesticides, etc.) are sent to a hammermill press, which squeezes out the remaining moisture and pulverizes the product into a gritty powder. Once the batch is finished, all that is left is yellow grease, "meat" and bone meal. This continuous batch cooking process goes on non-stop, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, grinding out ton after ton of saleable product.

Depending on the **dominant ingredient** of a particular run, the product now becomes: beef, chicken, lamb, meat meal, meat by-products, poultry meal, fish meal, fish oil, yellow grease, tallow, beef fat, chicken fat, etc.

Never is it labeled, dog meal, cat meal, skunk meal rat meal, or any of the "other" goodies that get mixed in with the everyday batches of "raw material".

Although this processing effectively kills off any beneficial enzymes, it **does not get rid of the sodium phenobarbital in the carcasses of euthanised animals.** The potential of other chemical contaminants to be degraded by the rendering process is also highly questionable. Perhaps instead of calling them rendering plants it would be more appropriate to call them "toxic waste" recycling plants.

Need we say who are some of the biggest customers of the finished product? You got it--the pet food companies. The primary source of meat and fat in commercial pet food is from this endless process of rendering.

The scary part is that millions of tons of this "food enhancer" is also trucked to poultry ranches, cattle feed lots, dairy and hog farms, fish feed plants, etc. where it is mixed with other ingredients to feed animals and fish that humans will eat.

By the time the pet food boys get through adding their own "enhancers" (i.e. preservatives, food dye, synthetic vitamins,) who really knows what's in the bag?

One of the most common problems I hear about is food allergies. Breeders switch from one brand to another, from beef to lamb, from grain to rice, etc. and find themselves frustrated at not being able to solve the problem. Things may seem to go well for a time and then the same old thing happens all over again.

Changing to lamb from beef would appear to be a logical thing to try, but how on earth do you really know just what you are really getting? Let me give you a hypothetical example of what could be in a run of "lamb" from the rendering plant and still legally be labeled as lamb.

If we were to bulldoze into the pit, say 25% of lamb parts, mix with 20% beef, 20% chicken, say 15% dogs or cats, and say a mixture of 20% of various road kill animal carcasses, we can say that **the dominant ingredient** of this run is lamb. (For this example we will ignore the % of plastic, metal, styrofoam, insecticide, etc.--all to small to affect the labeling process).

As long as the rendering plant does not misrepresent the % of protein or fat or calcium, etc., they are legitimately entitled to sell the run to you favorite pet food manufacturer as "lamb".

By the way, I should mention that the fat sold by the rendering industry does not all come from animals. Thanks to the proliferation of fast food restaurants, nearly half of the "raw material" is waste kitchen grease and frying oil cleaned out of the traps on a regular basis (another industry all of it own). Again, the pet food people rely on this source for the fat that is usually sprayed on the kibble at the end of the drying process.

Once you understand just what really goes into producing a commercial pet food, you can't really be surprised to learn that many of the health problems we see in our companion animals are directly attributable to a lack of proper nutrition.

When someone asks me "aren't you afraid of salmonella or contamination in the raw meat you use?", I only wish I could take them out to a rendering facility and show them just how bad the commercial goop can be! Never again would they buy a bag or can of pet food without realizing just what they are really doing. Never again would they have any fear of using "fresh" meat in place of what the industry laughingly calls food for pets.

For any of you that have not yet switched to a raw diet, I would urge you to go back and read Volume 1 Issue 2, in conjunction with this article. By doing this you should have enough basic information to make a fundamental decision on the type of diet you choose to use for your animals.

Let me repeat what I said in that article. As we move into the 21st century maybe it's time we turned the clock back a hundred years and got back to some basic nutrition.

PREVENTING EYE DISORDERS

Most breeders believe that eye disorders such as cataracts, glaucoma and macular degeneration are genetic and any lines with a history of such problems should not be bred.

While there is no doubt that genetics does play a role in determining if an animal is more or less susceptible to eye disorders, there are several natural substances that have been clinically proven to help prevent the onset of such disorders.

Although many aspects of vision remain a mystery, what is known is in order for normal vision to occur, light must interact with the specialized nerve cells of the eye to create a nerve impulse. The nerve impulse is then transmitted to the brain. Many nutritional compounds are important in vision, both in terms of damage as well as the actual process of vision.

The origin of many eye diseases, including cataracts and macular degeneration, is ultimately related to damage caused by free radicals. Simply stated, a free radical is a highly reactive molecule that can bind to and destroy body components. Free radical or "oxidative" damage is what makes us age.

The health of the eye is largely dependent on a rich supply of nutrients and oxygen. Relatively speaking, the amount of blood flow through the eye is the greatest in the body. This high blood flow highlights the importance of nutrition and the circulatory system. When normal mechanisms to deliver oxygen and other nutrients to the eye begin to fail, a variety of disorders develop. Usually these are associated with aging, but occasionally they do occur in very young dogs.

Obviously if we can find a way to keep the blood capillaries in the eye healthy (so that the flow is not encumbered) and keep the collagen structures in the eye in good condition (providing the tensile strength and integrity to the tissues), with a minimum of free radical damage, most eye disorders could be prevented.

To prevent capillary fragility, clinical studies have demonstrated a positive effect from using Bilberry extracts and Ginkgo biloba. In Europe, bilberry extracts are now part of the conventional medical treatment of many eye disorders.

Bilberry (vaccinium myrtillus) is a member of the Vaccinium family that includes the cranberry, cowberry and blueberry. Renewed interest in the medicinal use of bilberry was first aroused when it was observed during World War 11 that British Royal Air Force pilots reported improved nighttime visual acuity on bombing raids after consuming bilberries. Subsequent studies showed that administration of bilberry extracts to healthy subjects resulted in improved nighttime vision, quicker adjustment to darkness, and faster restoration of vision after exposure to glare.

Bilberry extracts have also been shown to provide significant protection against the development of cataracts when combined with proper diet. In one human study, (3) bilberry extract plus vitamin E stopped progression of cataract formation in 97% of 50 patients. Preliminary research suggests that flavonoid components in the diet may be in part, responsible for the protective effects.

I'll cover Ginkgo biloba in another issue but for now it is enough to know that it is also very useful in various circulation problems.

Of course, antioxidants such as vitamin C, etc. can play a major role in preventing eye disorders. You should also be aware that there is a wide range of other vitamins and minerals which are known to be present at significantly higher concentrations in healthy eyes, relative to overall body levels.

For prevention, the best single product I have come across is "OcuDyne"™, made by Allergy Research Group. This product was formulated by Jonathan V Wright, M.D. and Alan R. Gaby, M.D. and contains prime antioxidents, key amino acids and active bioflavonoids, in combination with high-potency botanical extracts of both Gingko biloba and bilberry. It also has the necessary range of vitamins and minerals mentioned above.

Of course diet is also going to play a role. Basic nutrition plays a major role in all prevention of health problems.

I am not condoning the practice of breeding lines with a genetic history of eye problems. Sometimes, however, a breeder may be reluctant to reveal that this kind of problem existed, or may honestly believe that they have eliminated the disorder from their program. Thus, if you have any doubt whatsoever that an eye disorder may be a possibility with that new puppy you just acquired, it would seem prudent to utilize a preventative measure rather than a "wait and see" method of health care.

CAN ANTIBIOTICS CAUSE INFECTIONS?!

A hospital in Glasgow thought so. Faced with having to close down its neuro surgical intensive care unit due to severe cross infections, the hospital elected to **discontinue both preventive and therapeutic antibiotic therapy!**

Results? First there was an immediate decrease in chest and urinary cross infections. Within 30 days the cross infection rate dropped to zero. Remarkably, the incidence of all infections was reduced; the respiratory infection rate falling from 45% to 15%, and the urinary infection rate falling from 21% to 8%. There were no serious problems related to discontinuing antibiotics--only good results.

Making a decision like this does not come easy. Especially when many of the patients were already on what was considered "life essential" antibiotic therapy. The staff of the hospital are convinced that many infections resolve in spite

of--rather than because of--antibiotic therapy. In other words, that means that your own body is responsible for clearing most infections. Most telling of all, they are convinced that "--the primary cause of many infections (most often attributed to germs or other causes) is in fact **the misuse or overuse of broad-spectrum antibiotics".**

Now here's the real kicker. This happened in **1971.** It's taken more than 25 years for the medical community to wake up and finally admit that the "magic" has gone out of the "magic bullet".

How much longer are we going to have to wait for the Veterinarian community to catch up? Has anyone out there gone through any kind of surgery for your animal **without** the vet insisting that an antibiotic be used either before or after surgery? (Sometimes both?). Has anyone out there found a vet that talks about boosting the immune system rather than using an antibiotic for the "just in case" infection?

Why must it be up to the breeder network to "teach" the veterinarian what should by now be common knowledge? I know I'm stepping on some toes here, but somebody has to speak out to get the message across! Somebody has to support the brave individual holistic vet that dares to put aside the outdated "acceptable" protocol and chooses to work without reaching for an antibiotic at every opportunity. If not the breeder then who?

UNSATURATED FATTY ACIDS

We are currently barraged with instructions to lower fat intake, especially from saturated fats (as in meats, butter, other dairy products, palm oil, etc.). Low-fat, non-fat, and now "fake" fat, food products dominate the supermarket shelves. Fear of fat in any form is now a typical response of the consumer.

Yet most of us are aware that the "essential fatty acids" (EFAs) are necessary for life and health. So how can we distinguish between what is "good" for us and what is "bad"? The answer lies in understanding the difference between what nature has provided for us and what man has done to alter the basics, seeking to make a more marketable product with more favorable economic attributes.

Formerly, unsaturated fatty acids (including essential fatty acids) were known as vitamin F. There are many types of fatty acids and virtually all fats and oils contain various combinations of the three basic categories: saturated, polyunsaturated, and monounsaturated (depending upon the chemical bonds of the carbon atoms).

Unsaturated fatty acids (UFAs) are usually found in the form of vegetable-source oils (such as liquid oils), while saturated fatty acids are usually found in solid animal fat (such as butter). Yet, each fat and oil will contain some saturated, some polyunsaturated, and some monounsaturated fatty acid.

Whole foods rich in UFAs and EFAs are virtually always sources of vitamin E as well. Nature designed foods so that both unsaturated fatty acids and vitamin E complex appear in the same foods--they belong together.

I could fill the rest of this newsletter (and perhaps the next one) with the benefits of unsaturated fatty acids and the importance of essential fatty acids. But for now, lets take a look at what happens when the heavy hand of industry "improves" on natures basics.

The trouble begins when foods and oils are refined and processed or when an isolated vitamin factor is removed. One hundred years ago, people ate fresh, whole foods including plenty of meat, butter, and lard. They **did not** ordinarily eat any refined and altered oils or fats. One hundred years ago, heart attacks were practically unheard of in the U.S. Alzheimer's disease did not exist. Diabetes was minimal. Does this sound like today's "new and improved" world? So where did we go wrong?

Many of the steps used to process vegetable oils, for example, affect the nutritional content and balance of the oils. Let me explain some of the processes used and the terms commonly found on the label of these products.

Expeller-Pressed. First, the food material is ground or rolled using a press with a constantly rotating warm shaft with temperatures ranging between 200°F and 475°F. The higher the temperature, the better for production and poorer for leaving nutrients unaffected. The oil molecules themselves are also altered.

The oil is degummed, a process that removes the chlorophyll, vitamin E, lecithin, and many minerals and trace elements. An alkaline solution is then added to separate out any unwanted substances (most of which contain nutrients).

Next is bleaching with diatomaceous earth which, when filtered out, takes with it the carotenes, remaining chlorophyll and other nutritive factors.

The oil is now clear. Deodorizing by steam distillation at temperatures over 450°F assures no rancid odor. Winterizing, or further clarification, is accomplished by cooling and filtering the oil. Any waxes or stearins (which can cloud the oil when refrigerated) are removed.

The resulting oil is colorless, tasteless, odorless, altered, and of course, devoid of nutrients. Any vitamin complexes in the original food are gone; any possible remnants of nutrients are only fractions.

Hydraulic pressed. The food material is ground or rolled and usually steam cooked at temperatures around 270°F. Any or all of the procedures mentioned above can be, and often are, used to prepare such oils for "shelf life". They too are devoid of most nutrients and what remains is unnaturally altered.

Solvent extracted. This is the process used for most commercial oils since it removes more oil from the raw material than the other two methods. The raw materials are cleaned, hulled and then flaked and crushed by rollers. Hexane and other petroleum or coal-tar-derived chemicals are used to (4) extract the oil from the solids (disposing of most nutrients

as well). Residues of these chemicals solvents tend to remain (these are very toxic and potentially carcinogenic). After solvent extraction, the oil is refined as described previously.

Oils used for supplements (e.g. wheat germ oil, cod liver oil, etc.) may be subjected to some or all of these processes. Other supplements may extract only fractions from oils, disrupting the natural and complete food complex (e.g. omega-3 oils, vitamin E, vitamin A, etc.)

CAUTION: As mentioned previously (Volume 1 No.3--March/95) many products are labeled as "cold pressed" using the same processes listed above. As near as I can determine the expression "cold pressed" has no legal meaning, so can be used in any way the manufacturer wishes despite the temperatures etc. used in the process.

The only brands that I trust at this time are "Flora" and "Omega Nutrition" that actually produce an unrefined, "whole" oil utilizing elaborate (expensive) methods without heat. Truly "cold pressed".

Almost all of the oils sold in health food stores are also refined and are almost identical to supermarket oils. Care must be taken to obtain only **unrefined** oils.

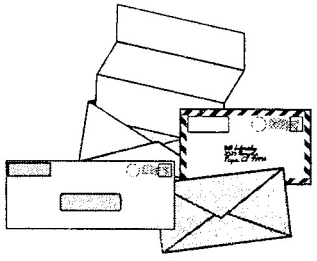
Now it wouldn't be so bad if these various forms of fatty acids were devoid of nutrition but not harmful. Unfortunately this is not the case. When these fatty acids are converted to the unnatural **trans** form and ingested, they are deposited in those parts of the cell membranes that are supposed to have either saturated fatty acids or unsaturated fatty acids. What transpires is that the "trans"-fatty acids essentially foul up the cells machinery.

Research has shown that some of the adverse effects of trans-fatty acids are: upsets cholesterol balance; lowers the amount of cream (volume) in breast milk of nursing mothers; increases blood insulin levels in response to glucose load; adversely affects the immune system; decreases levels of testosterone and increases the level of abnormal sperm in male animals; interferes with pregnancy in female animals, decreases the response of the red blood cell to insulin; inhibits the function of important cell membrane-related enzymes, resulting in decreased conversion of fatty acids to needed forms; causes alterations in the activities of the enzyme system that detoxifies chemical carcinogens and drugs; causes alterations in fat cell size, cell number, lipid class, and fatty acid composition; is associated with atherosclerosis, cancer, diabetes, obesity,---and on and on and on. **These are essentially the reverse of what the whole, natural vitamin F complex (unsaturated fatty acids and associated nutrients) accomplishes and assists.**

So what has this got to do with our animals?

For those of you still feeding a commercial pet food, imagine starting with the above trans-fat forms, using it for frying human foods and when it is "worn out" sending the junk to the nearest rendering facility to be recycled yet again for use in the pet food industry! For those of you feeding a natural diet, take careful note of our "caution" above. (5)

MAILBOX



Dateline Feb./97--Maine

Dear Marina,

I called you in regards to my dog who had a severe "crate tail" problem. As you know, this can be a common problem that is very difficult to heal.

The skin on the end of the tail becomes injured by constant banging in the crate (from tail wagging) or even just on furniture, walls etc. The injury becomes so bad that the slightest little tap will send blood flying!! As you can imagine this can get extremely messy.

As the skin never gets a chance to heal properly, secondary infection becomes a problem and antibiotics are needed. Of course we try bandaging the tail which can help to some extent. However, when the bandage is removed the skin is still very thin and fragile--thus it is a viscous circle. In the end the vet's advice is amputation of part of the tail!

After discussing the situation, you sent me several remedies to help the problem. Improvement was slow but steady (as you said it would take time as the tail is such an extremity of the body). Now, after a couple of months, the tail is stable and healed, with hair growing back!

I am so thankful to have found an alternative that worked so well. Amputation was close at hand for our boy and we really dreaded it. We are so happy that it will no longer be necessary.

In this case the remedies used were: Homotoxicology--Cutis Comp., Funiculus umbilicalis, (for stimulation of the dermal function and the connective tissue function), Traumeel liquid (to promote healing) and Traumeel ointment applied externally.

Colloidal Silver was also used topically in this case, directly on the tail to help fight possible infection and to promote the healing of the skin.

Glandulars--Dermatrophin-- specific nutritional support for the epithelial (skin) cells. Extremely helpful to promote healing. Cyruta-Plus--used specifically for capillary fragility (to repair burst or ruptured capillaries and tone vascular wall), and Chlorophyll Complex--to help with blood clotting and healing of soft tissue.

The following case involved a very young Pomeranian with a fractured front leg.

Dateline April/97--California

Dear Marina,

I really wanted to thank you for your help with....(name of dog). As you know he suffered a fractured leg that was put in a cast for one month. After the cast was removed, the vet again took x-rays and to our surprise the bones showed no signs of healing whatsoever! Other than keeping him in a cast, nobody seemed to know what else to do for him.

A friend of mine suggested I contact you to see if maybe you could suggest some nutritional support to help my poor boy. You sent me some remedies and I am happy to report that within a few weeks, when we rechecked the fracture, it was almost healed.

Since then there is no further problem and he runs and plays just like nothing ever happened.

Thank you so much for helping us with this unusual situation.

Sometimes the normal healing functions of the body seem to need that little extra "kick start" to do their job. In this case we used:
Osseous Complex--a glandular to support bone matrix and promote healing,
Bone liquescence--a homeopathic/glandular combination specific for bone healing,
Discus Comp. and Graphites Homaccord--used to support proper calcium metabolism as well as helping with cartilage matrix.
Ubichinon Comp.--a deep acting remedy that aids the body to unblock damaged enzyme functions throughout the body. (In this case the body was not responding to the fracture).

This combination was enough to help the little guy get back on track and allow the body to heal itself.

Dateline Feb./97--California

Dear Marina,

Just thought I would let you know how we made out with our Great Dane bitch. As you know, we planned to do a C-section due to a previous history of delivery problems (uterine inertia) and because this litter was large (12 pups).

We did have a problem after the c-section in that the bitch had no discharge and the milk had not let down after 30 hours!

Following your advice we gave one dose of Sepia 1m and hourly doses of Caulophyllum 1m and pregnancy formula. This resulted in good discharge and promoted the milk to flow. As everything appeared to be going along so well, we started to back off on the frequency of giving the remedies with the idea of stopping them if not required.

However, it must have been too soon because I could see a direct correlation to the amount of discharge and milk production which decreased as we decreased the remedies. So we kept up with the remedies 3 to 4 times daily and all went well.

It shows that this bitch produces a low oxytocin level and when given the remedies she responded. Her mother and grandmother had no problems like this.

I am very grateful to have had a way to help the problem as otherwise we might have lost all the pups. Thank you so much for your help.

Again homeopathic remedies provided a safe alternative to the use of drugs. As the litter was so large, obviously adequate milk flow was mandatory to ensure the healthy survival of the pups.

Dateline April/97--California

Dear Marina,

I received the items for my puppy today and gave them to him as directed. I could not believe it!!!

Within 1 minute it was like his head unclogged and he had a small amount of clear liquid come out of his nose. There is now no sign of congestion at all. It is like a miracle happened.

I thought this can not be happening so I went and checked him an hour later, same thing, no congestion!!

Thanks a million from my puppy and me. I am sure he feels a whole lot better.

This case involved a puppy that was very congested, was having trouble breathing, and was not doing well. The items used were Euphorbium, Echinacea Forte, Mucosa Comp. along with Colloidal Silver Oligo and the Fading Puppy Remedy.

These provided the specifics for congestion as well as immune boosters and infection fighters. It is always so wonderful to see the rapid response possible when a homeopathic preparation boosts the "vital force" to its optimum function.

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LACTOBACILLUS ACIDOPHILUS

We have often mentioned the "good guys" that are destroyed with the use of antibiotics and the need to replace them at the earliest opportunity. This can be vital in the case of our old friend Lactobacillus Acidophilus. These tiny bacteria are much more than just your friendly intestinal flora.

Research and clinical results show that many diseases may be influenced, not by the presence of a pathogenic agent, but rather by the **absence of the normal intestinal flora.** Important roles played by lactobacillus acidophilus include:

- Production of important digestive enzymes.
- Keeping both constipation and diarrhea under control.
- Counteracting lactose intolerance.
- Detoxification, or "cleaning out" the system by binding to unwanted substances and causing them to be excreted.
- Protecting the surfaces of intestinal mucous membranes.
- Suppression of undesirable bacteria by helping to maintain an antibacterial and antifungal environment.
- Reduction of bad breath by replacing organisms responsible for unpleasant odors with neutral organisms.
- Reduction of intestinal gas by breaking down the sugars (including lactose) that are consumed by and promote "bad guy" bacteria.
- Cholesterol control by promoting normal absorption of dietary fats and facilitating elimination of unwanted cholesterol before it is absorbed.
- Compensation for the decreased motility of the gastro-intestinal tract, decreased mucous secretions and muscular atrophy of the small and large intestine, and even changes in the nervous system--all products of the aging process.
- Production of additional supplies of vitamins and other trace nutrients. Many of the B vitamins (including riboflavin, B-12, Thiamin, folic acid and panthenic acid) in addition to certain proteins, are **produced** by lactobacillus acidophilus.
- Suppression of candidiasis, as well as a number of other intestinal disorders.

It goes without saying that commercial pet foods are totally lacking in viable organisms. Thus any combination of antibiotics (which effectively kills off these friendly bacteria) and "dead" food (no replacement of the good guys), can have devastating consequences. At least with a raw diet we can have the assurance of feeding flora-rich food.

Nevertheless, you would be wise to utilize a supplement whenever antibiotics are used. If you are still feeding kibble, it would be appropriate to supplement with live lactobacillus on a regular basis.

Supplements can be purchased from a number of different sources, including your local drug store. Please make sure you are getting good quality. It should be refrigerated. Some of the powders, capsules, tablets, sitting on the shelf simply don't contain enough live lactobacillus acidophilus to be effective.

PANOSTEITIS HERBAL REMEDY

Panosteitis (commonly referred to as Pano or sometimes as "long-bone") is a typical example of an affliction that the orthodox veterinarian community has failed to provide any satisfactory cure. The use of an anti-inflammatory drug, providing temporary relief at best, seems to be their only answer. There have been many articles written about this painful and debilitating disease, describing in the fullest scientific jargon the theoretical causes and the difficulty in arriving at a true diagnosis. In general, all agree that it is "incurable".

Yet most breeders (particularly with the "giant" breeds) recognize the problem almost automatically. Those people that have chosen to seek "alternative" veterinarian care, know that there is a particular herbal formula that has been used successfully time after time.

Over the many years that I have recommended this formula, I have heard back from countless breeders that this blend has provided quick relief and in most cases complete cure, of this "incurable" malady.

The formula contains the following nine herbs: Boneset; Blue Vervain; Comfrey; Fenugreek; Goldenseal; Nettle; Mullein; Rose Hip; and Sarsaparilla.

Some, such as Boneset, are specific for bone problems. Juliette de Bairacli Levy describes this as "...useful in all forms of fevers and colds and in all bone weakness from rickets to tender or aching bones".

Comfrey, (which has received much adverse publicity in this country) is considered to be one of the few true "wonder herbs" through centuries of use. According to Juliette "It has the power to aid speedy knitting together of fractured bone ends...is used to strengthen strained or weak ligaments and muscles also a remedy for rheumatism, arthritis and allied ailments".

Other herbs in the formula are natural anti-inflammatory and immune boosters and circulation aids. Together they work synergistically to alleviate Pano in a safe manner that is easy on the system. I do have the premixed blend on hand if you need it.

Basic dosage: for dogs under 75 lbs.--1 heaping teaspoon twice daily. Over 75 lbs.--1 heaping tablespoon twice daily. This can be increased if needed.

Every once in a while, where this blend has not produced the desired results, we have found it useful to add "Arth-9" and the homeopathic remedy "Traumeel". This is only necessary in the really stubborn cases and has been rare.

Of course the usual caveat should be mentioned. The **quality** of the herbs used is all important.

My heart does go out to all those puppies that are going through so much pain and misery...**needlessly!** I can only hope that the "good word" reaches their owners soon.

WHAT IS A VITAMIN ?

A vitamin is an extremely complex organic substance needed in very small amounts in the diet, and is essential for human life and metabolic processes for growth, maintenance, and health. The body is not capable of producing (or producing sufficient quantities) of vitamins to supply its needs under normal circumstances.

The orthodox view of vitamins for decades had been that they were "compounds essential for preventing **deficiency** diseases and as coenzymes in key physical and chemical reactions in the body".

The nature, chemical structure and composition of most of them are considered "known" and most of the fractions have been isolated and many synthesized. Research has really only scratched the surface of identifying all the interdependent, interactive components of the complexes.

A more recent viewpoint is that vitamins are just like other food factors. They exist as extremely complex groups of associated substances of a synergistic (cooperative) nature, and that if the complex is taken apart (fractionated), it is no longer capable of producing its normal nutritional and metabolic effect or function.

"**These vitamin and mineral elements are so complex and multiplex that their nutritional importance has been invariably discovered only by investigating the symptoms of physical degeneration and functional failures in animal and human subjects who are supplied with food lacking some of these essential elements. Further investigations have always shown that the lost material was so complex in its organic nature as to defy artificial substitution, if complete restoration was to be attempted. Where less than complete restoration was attempted, the results have been extremely unsuccessful.**" (Source: Linder, Nutritional Biochemistry and Metabolism).

A vitamin is a complex mechanism--a working process-- of biological "wheels within wheels", of functional, interrelated, interdependent components. A vitamin consists of, not only the organic nutrients identified as the vitamin, but also enzymes, coenzymes, antioxidants, and trace element activators. Since enzymes are proteins, they must contain amino acids and trace minerals. To quote Dr. Royal Lee "In fact, every mineral needed by the living cell is commonly found in a **natural assemblage** of vitamin concentrates."

Every species is unique in their nutritional requirements. Every individual is unique in his or her nutritional requirements. Each has a pattern of needs all his own which in itself may vary due to environmental and circumstantial conditions.

Moreover, a generally accepted "adequate" vitamin level in the body does not mean that certain tissues or organs or systems which require a higher amount are getting sufficient quantities for their proper or optimal function.

The classical deficiency diseases are simply the **final stages** in a long-term depletion of the nutrient. (8) Unfortunately, along the way, degenerative and chronic diseases may begin to develop.

With foods and food concentrates (containing whole nutritional complexes) the body can **choose** its needs for assimilation and excrete what it does not need. This is called "selective absorption". On the other hand, with fractionated or isolated and/or synthetic vitamins, there is no choice. The body must handle the chemical in some manner and can suffer consequences of biochemical imbalances and toxic overdose.

Considering modern farming and food processing methods, America is facing a hidden form of starvation--not due to the **quantity** of food, but to deficiencies of needed food nutrients!

According to an article in Health Counselor in 1991, some common nutritional deficiencies now in the U.S. include: 90% of people are deficient in chromium; 80% are deficient in pyridoxine (vitamin B6); 75% are deficient in magnesium; 68% are deficient in calcium; 57% are deficient in iron; 50% are deficient in vitamin A; 45% are deficient in thiamin (vitamin B1); 41% are deficient in vitamin C. **These amounts are based on average minimal requirements.** Individual needs may make deficiencies much more serious.

Of course no one is going to spend the money required to make a similar survey of our animal companions. However, if the situation is this bad with "people" food, the results from a general populace study of animals would be mind blowing.

I hope this throws some light onto the wild claim of 100% nutrition in a bag, so loudly proclaimed by the purveyors of pet food. I guess if you tell a big enough lie often enough, it becomes a "truth".

Keep thinking for yourselves, friends!

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MEDICINE

(Author Unknown)

I have an earache.....

- 2000 B.C.--Here, eat this root.
- 1000 A.D.--That root is heathen. Here, say this prayer.
- 1850 A.D.--That prayer is superstition. Here, drink this potion.
- 1940 A.D.--That potion is snake oil. Here swallow this pill.
- 1985 A.D.--That pill is ineffective. Here take this antibiotic.
- 2000 A.D.--That antibiotic is artificial. Here, eat this root.

'Till next time, take care out there.